

WELLINGTON (SALOD)
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



INTERIM REPORT

on the

Health and Sanitary
Circumstances

of the

WELLINGTON URBAN DISTRICT

for the

YEAR 1910

INTERIM REPORT FOR WELLINGTON URBAN for the YEAR 1946.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

The Ministry of Health has ordered little change from the form of Annual Report which has prevailed since 1939 and with the exception of more detailed information on Factory Control the general information given closely follows the lines of the period.

1946 was a year of comparative freedom from infectious disease. Generally there was a diminution in numbers and despite the diversity of types of illnesses noted the whole reflected a satisfactory state. Comment may be passed on the continued absence of Diphtheria from the District and to the almost complete freedom from Dysentery.

Tuberculosis shows an increased total on the Register together with a rise in the number of new cases notified. The Death Rate compares reasonably favourably with that of the Country generally, and in the case of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis there has been a complete absence of Deaths.

Vital Statistics show a rise in the Birth Rate on that of 1945. The General Death Rate has fallen and is below that of England and Wales. The Infantile Mortality Rate has reverted from the abnormally high rate of 1945 and is almost a fourth of that unusual figure. Again there have been no deaths from Maternal Causes.

The Sanitary Circumstances of the Area are dealt with in the relevant sections of the Report and attention is directed to the Section on Housing. Particularly urgent is the need for the removal of unoccupied derelict buildings, formerly homes.

The Medical Officer of Health takes this opportunity of thanking the Sanitary Inspector for his close collaboration in the work of the Health Department during the year and for his assistance in the compilation of this Report.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	2,256	Sum represented by a penny rate ..	£275
Registrar General's estimate of resident population	11,550	Rateable Value	£68,535
No. of inhabited houses (end of 1946) according to Rate Books ..	2,769	Persons per acre (calculated on population)	5

Wellington is mainly a residential town serving as the market for the neighbouring mining and industrial districts ; it is the principal business and banking centre for some miles around and is linked up with a large agricultural district which nearly surrounds it. The chief industries are brewing, malting and the manufacture of agricultural implements, galvanised tanks, and sheet metal. Two toy factories, the products of which enjoy a wide reputation, employ a number of girls. The educational facilities of the area are further enhanced by the presence of high-class residential schools.

The Free Library, Reading Room, Public Swimming and Slipper Baths and Recreation Grounds are under the control of the Council, who in addition are the water undertakers for a portion of the adjoining area. There are good general, wholesale and cattle markets which are under private control. The public supply of electricity is under the West Midlands Joint Electricity Board and the gas undertaking is privately owned.

The Wrekin Lodge Hospital, formerly the Poor Law Institution, a Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic, a Home for Ailing Babies, and a Cottage Hospital are situated in the district.

There is not as yet under the town's ownership any public park or recreation ground sufficiently large to provide for general recreational facilities. There is, however, a popular well-known football club, and in addition there is an excellent golf course, several bowling and tennis clubs, and a cricket club has recently been formed. There is an active Youth Club, Y.M. and Y.W.C.A. clubs and an Ex-Serviceman's club.

The Sanitary Inspector reports that during the year there has been no sign of any decrease in the immigrant population.

The housing position remains extremely difficult, many houses having two or more families living in them. The slight relaxation of pressure on living space noticed a little time after the cessation of hostilities has, with the return of men and women from the Forces, been eliminated, and the position has not been ameliorated by young married couples in lodgings having children. There is evidence from the investigation of applications for Council houses that, apart from the serious hygienic condition that many families are living in, in many cases acute mental and nervous strain is being imposed by domestic difficulties and incompatibilities between families living in the same home.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births—	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate ..	109	79	188
Illegitimate ..	6	9	15
Totals..	115	88	203

Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population ..	17.57
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population (England and Wales) ..	19.1

Still Births—	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate ..	—	2	2
Illegitimate ..	—	—	—
Totals..	—	2	2

Deaths—	Males	Females	Total
Total Number of Deaths	68	56	124
Death Rate per 1,000 of population ..	..	..	10.7
Death Rate per 1,000 of population of England and Wales ..	..	..	11.5

Infantile Mortality—

All infants per 1,000 births ..	..	..	29.6
All infants per 1,000 live births—England and Wales ..	..	..	43.0
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 live legitimate births ..	..	..	31.9
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 live illegitimate births ..	..	..	—
Total number of infant deaths—Male	Female	Total	
Legitimate ..	5	1	6
Illegitimate ..	—	—	—
Totals	5	1	6

Deaths from :—

Cancer (all ages) ..	..	23
Measles (all ages) ..	..	—
Whooping Cough (all ages) ..	..	—
Diarrhoea (under 2 years) ..	..	—

Maternal Mortality :—

Under this heading, there were no deaths.

Chief Causes of Death :—

Tuberculosis (all forms) ..	..	..	4
Influenza ..	..	..	—
Cancer ..	..	..	23
Intra-cranial Vascular Lesions ..	..	..	13
Heart Disease and Circulatory disturbances			31
Respiratory Diseases ..	..	..	5
Nephritis ..	..	..	3
Premature births and congenital diseases			5
Violent causes ..	..	..	7

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR HEALTH SERVICES IN DISTRICT.

AMBULANCE SERVICE.

The town continues to provide an ample and adequate service for its area, and during the course of the year there have been few complaints. Close association is maintained with services supplied by neighbouring authorities, and the integration fits well into the scheme for the North East Salop generally. During the course of the year discussions have taken place with the County Authority on the transference of the control of this service to the County Authority and it is expected that by 1948 considerable changes will have been made in the service.

The ambulance itself on the street looks smart and efficient.

MORTUARY SERVICE.

No alteration in the existing service has taken place during the year, but discussions have been held with a neighbouring authority as to the provision of a completely new mortuary fully equipped with all necessary apparatus to be built on a new site in a suitable position. Considerable progress was made in these discussions, sites were inspected and plans produced, and it is hoped that a full scheme will be presented to the Ministry in the ensuing year.

HOME VISITING.

Nurse Riley, District Health Visitor, reports as follows :—

Homes visited	..	..	..	..	1,394	Chicken Pox	..	..	..	..	20
Influenza	..	..	..	..	10	Dirty Homes	..	12	Visits	..	25
Scabies	..	12	Visits	..	21	Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	1
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	6						

SECTION C.

SCAVENGING.

The collection of domestic refuse has been made weekly and two or three times a week from business premises, schools and canteens. The collection is carried out by mechanical and horse transport, and the whole operates very efficiently.

Adequate tipping facilities are provided by the Council on the outskirts of the town, and the tip, run on the " Bradford " system, is well kept and without complaint.

Unfortunately, difficulties in obtaining supplies and making stable contracts have delayed putting into operation the scheme adopted by the Council for providing and maintaining refuse receptacles. While some new dustbins have been secured by owners and occupiers of property when required there still remains a considerable number of insanitary and dilapidated receptacles.

SALVAGE.

The salvage of waste paper, cardboard and waste food continues, under the supervision of the Surveyor. As mentioned last year the Council has engaged staff to make the collections and whilst this has increased the cost it is felt that the results fully warrant the financial expenditure. The decrease in the amount of salvage collected in 1944 has been arrested and due to the efforts of the Salvage Committee and Officer the residents in the town have responded very well. The waste food is utilised for pig feeding. The whole scheme is operated at a small loss.

SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The sewerage system which has served the Town for many years without any major alteration or improvement has now arrived at an age when its functioning is unequal to the demands. It has for some time been unable to deal with little more than normal flow and it is to be feared that with additional house drainage from new building schemes and the road surfaces to these serious difficulties from flooding may arise. The plans for a new outfall and the reconstruction of the internal channels in the Town proper are now in the hands of the Ministry of Health and it is hoped that at an early date these plans will be able to be put into construction. It is essential that this work should be, in the main, in operation before any large numbers of new houses are erected.

DISINFECTION AND CONTROL OF VERMIN.

The Council continued to be exercised over the destruction of rats and mice and were, finally, of the opinion that they could deal with the problem with more continuity if they could exercise the powers given under the Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919. Application has been made to the County authority for delegation of these powers but this was not pressed in view of impending legislation on this subject.

Under the Ministry of Food's scheme an initial treatment of the sewers has been undertaken by rodent officers of the County authority assisted by the Council's workmen. A maintenance treatment will be done early in the new year.

Arrangements are made by which the use of the steam disinfecting apparatus at the Public Institution is available for the disinfecting of mattresses, pillows and blankets. This has been made use of in connection with cases of Tuberculosis and Scabies.

The use of D.D.T. has been effective in dealing with various infestations in private dwellings.

WATER.

No shortage of supply has been experienced in the year.

The condition of the No. 2 Pump at Woodfield has continued to give rise for anxiety but this has in some measure been offset by the satisfactory results obtained from the working of the new submersible pump in No. 1 bore. The output of the former has not been sufficient to maintain the level of the covered reservoir and this has thrown an additional burden on the new pump. The Authority has now decided to instal a similar submersible pump in the adjacent borehole and this project has been furthered to the extent of making an order for this and the financial considerations involved are now being decided.

At Woodfield an additional difficulty experienced has been that of throwing up of sand in the water pumped. This has been enquired into and the Engineer has made a report which it has been decided to follow. The borehole concerned will be examined at the first opportunity when the pumps have been raised.

The new ten-inch main at Hadley taking water from the supply of the neighbouring Rural Authority's works at Lilleshall has been giving an additional 80,000 gallons per day and at the mid-year the average daily consumption has been over 600,000 gallons—an increase of 10 per cent. compared with the corresponding period in 1945.

The Consultant Water Engineer has been instructed to prepare plans for the renewal of the internal water mains and to take such steps as are necessary to carry

through this work. The collapsing of old corroded mains in the Town emphasise the urgency for getting this scheme into operation and the Ministry of Health has been approached with a view to expediting reconstruction.

Chlorination has been continued in accordance with the Ministry of Health's instructions. A new plant at Woodfield at first gave rise to some difficulties but with adjustment and trial such difficulties have been overcome and the chlorination there now functions smoothly. In connection with the supply from the natural gathering ground of the Wrekin trials have been made to formulate a table to meet the demands for chlorine. This has involved experimentation as the water is variable in quality and requires some variation in chlorine to secure the average residuum.

The quality of the Town's supply has generally been good. Such samples as have been found to be suspicious have resulted in the inspection of the sources and in every case the contaminants have been eliminated. Such examinations have been made on the natural water before chlorination.

Some 7 per cent. of the Town's population are dependent on standpipes, the remainder having direct supplies into their homes.

The Authority has under consideration the installation of a general water softening plant which it is felt would benefit the domestic convenience and economy, and this at a relatively small cost.

Arising out of the Water Act, 1945, a meeting of all Authorities in the Eastern Area has been held. This considered the linkage and co-ordination of all piped systems involved and the general principles involved were accepted at that time. The matter has now passed to consideration of the financial commitments.

BATHS.

Under the Authority's ownership there is a covered swimming bath and in addition there is an open-air pool: this is privately owned. The water from both has been submitted for analyses from time to time, and the reports on these have been satisfactory.

An application to the Ministry of Health for permission to instal a purification plant at the covered baths has been made and this request has been granted. Resulting from this an order has been given for the provision and installation of such plant has been made and it is anticipated that this new service will be in operation early in 1948. With this much needed improvement it is expected that many more of the townsfolk will take advantage of the bathing facilities and that the public will benefit accordingly.

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

A large proportion of the time of Council work has during the year been directed to housing matters.

Permanent Houses. Work on the building of the 86 houses making up Scheme A has been commenced. Progress has, however, not been so rapid as was hoped due, chiefly, to the shortage of labour, particularly in relation to bricklayers. Every avenue was explored to secure more help, but with little success and the year ended with hopes that in 1947 the conditions would improve.

During 1946 houses have been completed.

The firm intention of the Council that building of homes should proceed with all expedition has been evidenced by their instructing the Architect to proceed with plans for Scheme B, this despite the earlier set-backs. In addition, application has been made to the Ministry of Health for permission to erect permanent prefabricated houses on this site. As a result the Ministry has offered 30 permanent prefabricated houses together with a further 20 temporary bungalows and these have been accepted. In furtherance of this the main services and roads on this site have been prepared.

It was not found possible, however, to proceed with the erection of the temporary homes on the site chosen as difficulties in securing ownership were experienced. The Council had proceeded to obtain the land desired when the landlord decided that he was not prepared to sell it, and the Authority eventually made other plans. This has seriously delayed the programme arranged for temporary housing, the more as the early erection of such dwellings had been expected to relieve some of the most urgent cases in the Town. As an alternative the Authority has had to make use of some land in their possession (land which would have been allowed to remain as open spacing) and to erect such dwellings as this would accommodate and to seek additional space to complete this scheme.

Repairs and Maintenance. No advance has been made in securing the repairs to working class properties and the strict control on the issuing of building licences has further curtailed such activity. Many urgent sanitary matters, under notice, were however able to be completed. The bad structural condition of many of these homes will considerably add to the numbers which will require to be completely cleared as beyond the possibility of recovery. The condition of homes, under Clearance Orders but still occupied, is in many instances deplorable and in some cases are rapidly becoming structurally dangerous. In this category one such had become so menacing that it had to be removed, the occupants having to be found other shelter.

In the matter of Clearance and the continuance of such properties as have ceased to be used as homes but are still standing, it is felt that the time has come for the Authority to take such steps as are necessary to secure complete demolition and so remove these derelict eyesores which are dangerous, insanitary and serve only for the encouragement of squatting and the harbouring of vermin. The Council has been quite definite in their attitude towards the letting by licence of condemned property and where such application has been made it has been refused. The Public Health Department has advised that the condition of any of these houses is such that none would reasonably be made capable of occupation without detriment to health.

The final stages of reconstituting the list of applicants for re-housing has been reached. Full investigation has been made into each case and the homes visited. A unit system is in use to secure an equitable assessment of the individual claim.

In the endeavour to see that no means of securing the most rapid erection of houses is missed, local builders have been interviewed and the co-operation of some six of these can be counted on to help the progress of the aforesaid Scheme B.

During the course of the year the Town Planning Officer presented his report and plans for the Future Wellington. These have been adopted and steps are now being taken in furtherance of this.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

The Central Abattoir at Shrewsbury continues to serve the district with meat and the system appears to be functioning in a satisfactory manner. There are two bacon

factories in the district and these are regularly visited by the Sanitary Inspector, who inspects all animals slaughtered there. Monthly reports on this inspection are submitted to the appropriate committee.

The following are the details of meat and other foods condemned during the year :—

Number of Animals Slaughtered	..	..	..	..	4,408 pigs.
Number of Animals Inspected	..	..	..	..	4,014 „

Approximate Weights in Lbs. of Diseased, Unsound and Unfit Meat found in Animals Inspected.

Pork	..	2,843 Carcases.	2,044 Offals.	Total, 4,887.
Total Weight : 2 tons 3 cwts. 2 qrs. 15 lbs.				

Particulars of Diseased Conditions Found.

Tuberculosis : Localised, 241 pigs. ; generalised, 1 pig.

There is an increase in the number of pigs slaughtered compared with 1945. The percentage of pigs affected in any degree with tuberculosis shows a very marked decrease as compared with 1945, i.e., 14.3 per cent. for 1945, and 6.03 per cent. for 1946.

The foodstuffs, other than meat, were surrendered from retail shops, food buffer depots, and the local N.A.A.F.I. central depot. As much food as possible was salvaged and, if not suitable for canteens or restaurants, was used for animal feeding. The Public Health Department works in co-operation with the Salvage Officer of the Ministry of Food and much food does not find mention in this report as it is dealt with direct by the Ministry on the certificate of the local Food Inspector.

The Surveyor's Department again co-operated in the collection and disposal of condemned foods.

The following foodstuffs were voluntarily surrendered during 1946 as being unfit for human consumption :—

Tinned Food.

Meat	..	..	55 tins	Fish	..	..	35 tins
Fruit	..	..	31 „	Vegetables	..	..	316 „
Milk	..	..	58 „	Jam	..	..	34 jars
Soup	..	..	7 „				

Meat, etc.

Ham	..	..	15 lbs.	Kidney	..	..	17 lbs.
Liver	9 „	Sausage	94 „
Cow Heels	160 „	Bacon	28 „

Fish.

Wet Fish	595 lbs.	Lobster	2 boxes
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Vegetables.

Cabbage	56 lbs.
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Fruit.

Oranges	160 lbs.
Apples	200 „

Dried Fruit

Raisins	86 lbs.	Sultanas	112 lbs.
Prunes	..	..	125 „	Dates	..	..	70 „
Figs	..	..	50 „				

Miscellaneous.

Butter	..	..	28 lbs.	Sweets	..	..	17 lbs.
Beans	..	..	18 „	Cake Mixture	..	..	56 pkts.
Rice	..	..	90 „	Dried Peas	..	..	23 lbs.
Biscuits	..	..	52 „	Semolina	..	9 cwts.	36 lbs.
Eggs	..	..	1,275	Cake	..	..	19 „
Dried Egg	..	..	42 „	Chocolate	..	..	6 „
Macaroni	..	..	5 cwts.	Chocolate	..	..	77 bars

MILK.

The zoning system for the distribution to households is still in operation and is divided among some thirteen retailers. Although further representations have been made in the endeavour to persuade the Ministry of Food to re-introduce Sunday deliveries the position remains unaltered. Dissatisfaction has been again expressed by consumers who, for a variety of reasons, desire to change their retailer but who have been unable to do so owing to the present regulations.

Samples, as routine, have been taken from all retailers delivering in the District and have been submitted for analyses. Of these a number were found to be unsatisfactory or doubtful in quality, and in these cases the methods of production and handling have been investigated. Suggestions have been made for improvement with, generally, satisfactory results.

Washings from churns and bottles have also been examined to determine the efficacy of sterilisation at the dairies. Fewer complaints have been received as to souring and this may be attributed in some measure to the stricter supervision of cowsheds and dairies.

The products from all places of production in the Area have been subjected to biological tests for tubercle bacilli, and in every case have been found to be negative.

During the year improvements have been effected on certain premises and a licence to produce tuberculin tested milk has been granted.

Places used for the manufacture and sale of ice-cream have been inspected periodically and the ingredients of such sent for analyses to determine the bacterial content and the degree of heat treatment applied. With the exception of one small manufacturer heat treatment is given in all cases.

In association with the County Authority and neighbouring Councils a uniform standard was agreed to control the administration of the Milk and Dairies Order. Forms were prepared embodying the requirements of the Order and the agreed standard and these have been sent to all producers and retailers.

BRITISH RESTAURANT.

This centre continues to give great satisfaction in its provision of mid-day meals and teas. During the year the number of meals served was 67,307 ; these included 1,703 carry-out meals and 8,063 children's meals. The tea meal is much appreciated by persons using the bus service which has a stand in the vicinity of the restaurant. Catering has been provided for a number of private functions which have been held at the restaurant, and on Saturday evenings the sporting public attend in large numbers.

The whole was operated at a slight profit.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Routine inspection of factories and workshops has been carried out and the requirements of the Acts enforced. A number of improvements are still outstanding due to the difficulty of obtaining labour and materials.

Certificates for the means of escape from fire have been amended where necessary ; no new certificates have been issued.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The following table gives the number of cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year, together with the number of Deaths :—

Disease	Cases Notified		Deaths	Disease	Cases Notified		Deaths
	1945	1946			1945	1946	
Measles ..	48	2	—	Dysentery	57	1	—
Scarlet Fever	13	7	—	Puerperal Pyrexia ..	2	2	—
Whooping Cough	45	19	—	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	4	4	—
				Paratyphoid	—	1	—
Diphtheria ..	—	—	—				
Pneumonia ..	16	8	—	Erysipelas	4	1	—

Incidence of Disease in Various Age Groups.

Years	Measles		Whooping Cough		Scarlet Fever	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	—	—	1	1	—	—
1	—	—	5	5	2	—
3	—	—	—	2	—	—
5	1	1	2	—	—	3
10	—	—	2	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	1	1	—
25	—	—	—	—	—	1
Age not known	—	—	—	—	—	—

Years	Pneumonia		Dysentery		Erysipelas		Paratyphoid	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
5	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	—
45	1	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
65	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

SCABIES.

During the year twenty-six cases of scabies were brought to notice and these received out-patient treatment at the Newport Treatment Centre. It is to be much regretted that it has been found necessary to close this Centre which has been most efficient and convenient for several years for the treatment of cases of scabies and allied complaints occurring in the district.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The immunisation of children under school age against diphtheria, under the control of the Welfare Authority, has continued and the Salop County Council has sent duplicate record cards to the Public Health Department in order that the bi-annual and annual returns could be made to the Ministry of Health.

The return to 31st December, 1946, was as follows :—

	Under 5 years.	5 years but under 15.	Total.
Number of children immunised	.. 393	1441	1834
Estimated child population	.. 990	1600	2590
Approximate percentage	.. 39.68%	90%	

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of notified cases on the register at December 31st, 1946, and the comparative number for 1944 and 1945 are as follows :—

	Males		Females		Total
	Pulmonary	Non-pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-pulmonary	
1946 ..	51	42	40	56	189
1945 ..	47	40	37	55	179
1944 ..	50	40	37	57	184

New Cases :		
Pulmonary	Non-pulmonary	Total
12	6	18

Death Rates :

	Wellington	England and Wales
Death rate from Pulmonary T.B. per 1,000 population	.. 34	248
Death rate from Non-pulmonary T.B. per 1,000 population	—	080
Total death rate (all forms)	.. 34	328

There were 4 Deaths from Pulmonary and none from Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

New Cases and Mortality, 1946.

Age Groups	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Respiratory		Non-respiratory	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0—5 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 ..	—	—	2	3	—	—	—	—
15—25 ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 ..	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
35—45 ..	3	3	—	—	—	1	—	—
45—55 ..	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 ..	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
65— ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	8	4	3	3	2	2	—	—

CANCER.

The number of deaths from Cancer in 1946 was 8 males and 15 females, giving a total of 23.

			Wellington	England and Wales
Death Rate per 1,000,000 living	..	..	1991	1768

W. A. M. STEWART.

July 7th, 1947.

Medical Officer of Health.

